

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

Editorial Opinions of the Leading Journals Upon Current Topics—Compiled Every Day for the Evening Telegraph.

THE NAVY AGAIN.

When the Monitor dropped her anchor in Portland harbor alongside the rickety hulks which, as the most available of their class, the Navy Department sent to greet her, we were the first to call attention to the contrast and to the reason which it taught.

When there comes to us a sad story from the other side of the globe. The Onetida is sunk by a collision with a passenger steamer within two hours after leaving port, in sight of land—a midshipman being apparently in charge of the deck—and nearly all hands are lost.

The telegrams tell us that the Onetida had, in a recent typhoon, lost all her boats (how many the original number was is not stated) but three, one of which was destroyed by the collision—leaving but two boats to save a hundred and seventy-nine men.

It is, after all, the saving and the loss of vessels and of lives which, far more than victory or defeat in battle or blockade, reveal the character and determine the merit or demerit of a naval service.

Is our naval service—the question is asked neither ungenerously nor unpatriotically—or even the military service as now organized, educated up to the standard which such emergencies require? We very much doubt it; while we do not doubt that none will encounter inevitable death more heroically than our brave sailors.

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complishment of the profession—this emergency—only needed in peaceful times when shipwreck is imminent—while the fear is resting on our service, and which it will be well for those having naval education and discipline in charge to burnish up.

THE CLOSE OF GRANT'S FIRST YEAR.

The quotations of gold, which have been steadily and rapidly going down during the past fortnight, fell on Friday till the premium reached the vicinity of 113—fluctuating the greater part of the day a few fractions above that point, but at one time striking a fraction below it.

The quotations of Government bonds indicated during the day that they were on the verge of par in gold, most of the varieties being worth but little less than gold, while one variety was at a gold premium over its face value.

That the day of which we are able to chronicle these highly favorable financial facts was also the day that marks the termination of the first year of President Grant's administration of public affairs, is a circumstance which the country will not lose sight of, and which the friends of the President will observe with unfeigned joy.

If the fall of the gold premium and the advance of the national credit affected only the Wall street speculators who have been half-crazed thereby, the matter would not be worth our attention. But its relation to all our business interests, and to all classes of our people—to producers and consumers, to farmers, merchants, mechanics, and laboring men of every order—is of such a nature as to make it of the highest consequence.

We take it of course that these movements are not in the nature of spasmodic fluctuations which may go the other way on any given day. If they were, they would be of advantage only to the speculators, and would continue to work the damage which the public interests have already suffered from previous fluctuations.

The downward movement of on Friday was accelerated by the circulation of an exhibit of our commercial exchanges, by which it appeared that the balance of trade against us during the second half of the last year was about two millions of dollars.

The things, however, for which the administration deserves the highest credit in connection with the improvement in our financial condition are such as relate to the carrying out of Grant's policy of honesty and reticence.

A Democratic paper recently took the trouble to attempt to show that neither Grant nor his policy deserved any credit for the brightening financial outlook. But Grant and his policy deserve the very highest credit. Suppose he had collected the revenues in the negligent manner of which we had so much previous experience; suppose the debt had been increased, as it was in the latter part of Johnson's administration; suppose the wasteful expenditures of Johnson's time had been continued; suppose we were experimenting with the greenback theory and the repudiation fraud—does anybody suppose that our bonds would now be at or near par, or that gold

would be quoted at its present price, or that our credit would stand where it does abroad? To ask the question is to answer it, and to show the absurdity of the reasoning of the Democratic organ.

It is not by the display of any immense genius or of any gigantic and mysterious "plan" that these great results have been wrought. It is by the carrying out of a few simple principles, the principles of honesty and economy, which President Grant announced one year ago.

AMERICA.

It is perhaps desirable that American affairs should from time to time attract notice in England, even when they possess little immediate interest, for the more important questions which occasionally arise can only be understood by the aid of a general familiarity with the state of political parties.

There is no reason to suppose that the singularly unfriendly feeling of General Grant's administration to England is for the moment actively shared by the general community; but Mr. Fish's last proceeding with reference to the Alabama controversy is not unworthy of observation. It may be remembered that Lord Clarendon had, in a studiously conciliatory spirit, divided into two parts, consisting of a despatch and a memorandum of the same date, his answer to Mr. Fish's extraordinary

The process of reconstruction approaches completion since the admission of Virginia to the Union, and in the certainty that the fifteenth amendment, providing for negro suffrage, will soon be adopted by the requisite number of States. The policy which has been pursued by the late and by the present Congress has secured the greater number of Southern votes to the Republican party; but its ultimate success will be contingent on the disappointment of Republican expectations, and on the practical reversal of the system of reconstruction.

A joint resolution recently introduced by Judge Kelley, and referred to the House Committee on Foreign Relations, calling upon the American Government to cause all unlawful restrictions upon the rights of free navigation in foreign countries to be removed through the medium of the diplomatic and consular officers of the United States, finds a practical application in the Black Sea and the Straits connecting it with the Mediterranean.

Mr. Seward had already made this matter the subject of a diplomatic correspondence with the powers bordering on the Black Sea; and, encouraged by the example of the United States, other nations opened negotiations of a similar nature, the result being to secure to vessels the privilege of passing in and out of the straits leading to the Black Sea during the night, which had been heretofore denied to the detriment of merchants and shippers.

But the present administration having failed to follow up Mr. Seward's vindication of the American principle of the freedom of the seas, no further progress has been made in that direction. Judge Kelley therefore introduced his resolution in order again to urge the importance of the matter upon the attention of the Government. It is to be hoped that prompt measures will be taken to deliver commerce and navigation in Eastern Europe from restrictions to which this country should not any longer submit.

hold no intercourse with negroes. The citizens of New Orleans protest against the corruption and violence of a Legislature returned by a negro majority. As soon as the Democrats, in the natural course of events, acquire the control of the Federal Government, the white citizens will almost everywhere resume the supremacy of which they have been temporarily deprived.

MARDI GRAS.

Mardi Gras, or Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday, is upon us with its feast of merriment and good things. The weather is good, yea, delightful, and everything gives goodly promise that the feast that immediately precedes the fast of our church people will be a joyful occasion to all who enter into the festivities with a Christian spirit.

A very large number of persons from all sections of our country have been attracted to New Orleans this year to witness the amusements of this day, and it is to be hoped nothing will occur to mar the pleasure that should be in store for all. In other countries the festivities that precede Lent are observed to a much greater degree than here, many days being enumerated as days of enjoyment.

In Rome the fast of Lent, which continues 40 days, is preceded by a feast of three days, called the carnival. This, says an eminent writer, is the origin of the present carnival or *Faschings*, as it is called in the south of Germany, and which continues in that country from the twelfth day to Ash Wednesday. The name carnival is derived from the Latin words *carne* and *vale* (according to DuCange, from the Latin denomination of the feast in the middle ages, *carne cramen*), because at that time people took leave of flesh.

Here is what lawyers would call a fatal variance—not between *allegata* and *probata*, but among the *probata* themselves—and it is very far from our design to reconcile it. We prefer, for a moment, to speculate on it in the alternative. Jefferson Davis, on leaving the Senate, as every one knows he did, sadly and reluctantly, looked to the future with that prescience of misery and evil which all patriotic men had, let the contest end as it might. He knew—no one better—from his military experience, not merely as a soldier but as a cabinet minister, what were the inevitable results.

Simon Cameron—a pro-slavery Democrat down to 1856, when his personal antipathy to Mr. Buchanan drove him to the support of Fremont; a rich, prosperous, not an unamiable man, who in his heart was no sentimentalist, and who did not care half as much for the negro, individually or in mass, as for the Middle-town Bank or the Northern Central—takes a jaunty, exultant view of the coming strife, and shaking his forefingers at the retiring Senator, tells him that "the penalty of secession will be not that slavery shall be abolished, or any great social or moral or political result ensue, but that Southern pride, and especially his (Mr. Davis'), shall be humbled by putting a negro in his place."

For our part, we take no stock in the canting sentimentalism that affects to discern the finger of a special Providence in the fact that Revels sits in the seat of Jefferson Davis. A negro in the seat of Jefferson Davis is, indeed, a phenomenon, but not quite so great a miracle as was the speaking of Balaam's ass. Without a divine interposition the ass could not have had the gift of human utterance in what we presume was good Hebrew; but it surely required no miracle to elect a negro to the Senate by the aid of bayonets. The machinery which elected so many carpet-baggers required no extra oil or new wheel to enable it to elect Revels, even though he is both a negro and a carpet-bagger.

The stupidest plantation hand in Mississippi might have foisted into the Senate with equal ease by the same military means. If Revels is well alone, he will immediately sink to his proper level. The social consideration due to his position, and the social contempt certain to be paid to his color, will make him sore and uncomfortable with the annoying contrast between his pretensions and his treatment. If he receives any social courtesies, it will be merely to spite the Democrats, who will most easily thwart such a design by not dignifying him with any further notice.

THE NEW SOUND DUES QUESTION. From the N. Y. Sun. A joint resolution recently introduced by Judge Kelley, and referred to the House Committee on Foreign Relations, calling upon the American Government to cause all unlawful restrictions upon the rights of free navigation in foreign countries to be removed through the medium of the diplomatic and consular officers of the United States, finds a practical application in the Black Sea and the Straits connecting it with the Mediterranean.

time to respect them. In the bound does question our earnest agitation succeeded in opening those waters to commerce; and a similar result will follow in the present instance if Congress and the Executive follow up the subject with the energy which it deserves.

PROPHECY AND HISTORY.

We read at this season in the good book that "prophecies fail" and "tongues cease," but charity never does. Under the new radical disposition, however, we have a different rule, and, while charity is postponed or trusted aside, prophecies are in full force and wicked tongues wag. Witness what occurred the other day on the occasion of the negro "revell" in the Senate. Just before the deed was consummated, Mr. Cameron, of Pennsylvania (he whom Lincoln turned out of his Cabinet), rose in his place and solemnly announced the important historical fact that when Jefferson Davis, in 1861, vacated his seat in the Senate, he (Cameron) told him (Davis) that, when next filled, it would be by a negro. And then Cameron, like ancient Simon—not Simon, who was by no means an exemplary character, and had an eye to the main chance—uttered a *venie dimittis*, and announced that, in the induction of a negro, he "had seen his salvation."

The Newark Daily Advertiser—usually a well-informed and always an intelligent paper—thus describes what we take to be the same incident: "Ten years ago Mr. Jefferson Davis, Senator from the State of Mississippi, vacated his seat in the Senate to become President of the Confederate States. As he passed out of the chamber he remarked to Senator Cameron, of Pennsylvania, that his successor would probably be a negro. The prophecy has been fulfilled. Davis, on leaving the Senate, as every one knows he did, sadly and reluctantly, looked to the future with that prescience of misery and evil which all patriotic men had, let the contest end as it might. He knew—no one better—from his military experience, not merely as a soldier but as a cabinet minister, what were the inevitable results.

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